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Up to April 10, 1968

2,830 U.S. planes were downed in North Viet Nam

SOUTH VIET NAM

FIERCE BATTLES IN KHE SANH SECTOR HEAVY LOSSES INFLICTED ON U.S.-PUPPET TROOPS

- ★ 2,200 Enemy Troops (Mostly G.I.'s) Killed or Wounded in a Week;
- ★ 6 P.L.A.F. Fighters Repelled All Counter-Attacks of U.S. Marines Battalion 2, Putting out of Action 115 Enemy Soldiers and Capturing About 100 Firearms;
- ★ Two Puppet Para Battalions Wiped Out near Lang Vay.

Quang Tri — Thua Thien P.L.A.F. fighters pursuing the enemy

PREMIER PHAM VAN DONG SENDS MESSAGE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE

Premier Pham Van Dong recently granted an interview to *CBS* correspondent Charles Collingwood at whose suggestion he addressed the following message to the American people through the *CBS*:

Dear friends,

Viet Nam and the United States are very far away from, but also very close to, each other. We are separated by half the earth, but both of us live on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Both the Declarations of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and of the United States begin with these famous words: "All men are created equal."

Friends, both from the United States and from other countries, who have visited our land, have all noted that the Vietnamese are an open-minded and plain, hard-working, intelligent and valiant nation who love life and men, their fatherland and their people, and at the same time, value everything good from other nations. Such a people will surely be master of their own destiny and build for themselves a happy life.

Yet for many years now, the warlike U.S. ruling circles have been waging an extremely atrocious war of aggression against our country, in defiance of all international and human laws. All mankind is against this criminal war. Our entire people are resolved to resist aggression till total victory.

The Viet Nam war has caused to the American people great losses in all fields with ever more serious repercussions on their life. In the interests of the American people, for the honour of the United States, you are opposing it with increasing determination and vigour.

The Vietnamese and American peoples now have a common objective. Let us struggle hard together for an end to the war of aggression in Viet Nam, and to force the U.S. government to bring its troops home. This victory will be a victory of the friendship between our two peoples.

Through the medium of CBS, the Vietnamese people convey their cordial greetings to the great American people who valiantly fought a colonial war to defend their national rights, and have set an example for all peoples of the world.

FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN DUY TRINH INTERVIEWED BY *CBS* CORRESPONDENT

Nguyen Duy Trinh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, recently granted an interview to Charles Collingwood, correspondent of the U.S. Columbia Broadcasting System.

Following are the questions and answers:

QUESTION 1:

In his March 31st speech, President Johnson stated that the Tết offensive has failed in its goal. Mr. Minister, what conclusions can be drawn from this offensive?

ANSWER:

Contrary to President Johnson's falsely optimistic words, the generalized offensive and uprisings in South Viet Nam early this year have dealt a telling blow at the U.S. machine of aggressive war, sparked off the disintegration and decay of the prop of U.S. neo-colonialism — the puppet army and administration — and irremediably driven the U.S. Expeditionary Corps on to the strategic defensive and into passivity. All Pentagon plans for a military victory in South Viet Nam have gone bankrupt. United as one man under the banner of the National Front for Liberation, the talented leader and organizer of the South Viet Nam Resistance, the people of South Viet Nam from the towns to the countryside are growing ever stronger as they fight on, and are sure to achieve their goals of independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, and prosperity.

QUESTION 2:

President Johnson has ordered U.S. aircraft and naval vessels to "make no attacks on North Viet Nam, except in the area north of the Demilitarized Zone." Do you believe, as President Johnson has expressed it, that this step permits "the contending forces to move closer to a political settlement"?

ANSWER:

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam has issued a statement

(Continued page 2)

Hanoi Press Opinion

JOHNSON'S MARCH 31 SPEECH: A CRAFTY TRICK OF THE VANQUISHED

JOHNSON'S address was an open admission by the U.S. President of the failure of the U.S. war of aggression in Viet Nam. In spite of all his artifices to conceal the truth, the U.S. Commander-in-Chief had to recognize the most bitter reality in the conduct of the war: the strategic initiative now lies completely in the hands of the adversary. In the same speech, Johnson had to announce the "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam. This is yet another acknowledgement of U.S. failure, not in words alone, but also in deeds on the battlefield.

.... At the same time, the announcement of the "limited bombing" also spells out U.S. obduracy. As North Viet Nam is not a backyard of the United States on which the U.S. may drop bombs at will, there is no sense to "limitation of the bombing" on any area whatsoever of our country.

... Johnson may have thought that by ordering the "limited bombing" he could appease public anger and divert from him the spearhead of condemnation by the whole progressive mankind. More than that, he hoped that this artifice could help him "kick back the ball onto the other side's area" and shift the blame for the continuation of the war on the adversary. However, the just position and the goodwill attitude of our government has caused a great embarrassment to the U.S. aggressors.

... As the U.S. has escalated the war to North Viet Nam it is natural that it must remove once and for all the ladder it has used to encroach upon the sovereignty of an independent country. There is no point for it to bargain.

And what about Johnson's "concern" about the safety of the U.S. aggressor troops in the South? Well, if Johnson really cares for the American troops, he should bring them home right away, because an aggressor can't enjoy any safety nor escape punishment.

Quan Doi Nhan Dan
(People's Army)
April 7, 1968

EARLY "HOT SUMMER" IN THE U.S.

ON the night of April 4, Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated by a white racist... Like oil poured on the flame, the tragic death of Dr. King immediately triggered a new, powerful wave of violence of the Black Americans... For some time now the Johnson administration has been living with the fear of a "summer of uprising" of the Black people even hotter than last year's. It did not expect that the "hot summer" of 1968 came so soon. At the moment when the U.S. imperialists are meeting with heavy and all-round failure and finding themselves in a blind alley in Viet Nam and confronted with serious economic and financial problems, the violent outbreak of the Black people will surely drive the Johnson clique into greater confusion and bewilderment.

The Johnson administration has long prepared to drown the Black Americans' struggle in blood in the coming summer... The fact is that under the Johnson administration, the plight of the Black people has worsened compared to any previous period. More and more Black American youths have been sent to a senseless death in Viet Nam. Black Americans account for 22 percent and more of the total U.S. casualties in Viet Nam where the Black Americans make up 11 percent in the total U.S. population. Their actions often violent and performed with arms in hands in the past three years against repression and for the complete emancipation of Black people are clear indications of a new development in the Black Americans' movement and of their rising combativeness and ever growing national and class consciousness. In co-ordination with the first front which is the world-wide front against U.S. imperialism the centre and frontline of which is in Viet Nam, the violent outburst of the Black Americans' struggle on the second front has spelled out the all-round political crisis which is plaguing U.S. imperialism at home and abroad.

Nhan Dan
(People's Daily)
April 7, 1968

(Continued from page 1)

Foreign Minister NGUYEN DUY TRINH Interviewed by *CBS* Correspondent

making clear its attitude to the U.S. "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam. The U.S. government has not seriously and fully met the legitimate demands of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, or of progressive American opinion and world opinion. Over the past few days, U.S. aircraft have carried out new criminal raids in North Viet Nam, and bombed many places in a 300 kilometre-long area from the 17th to the 20th parallel. The U.S. government must prove by words and deeds that it really wants serious contacts and talks, i.e., it must unconditionally stop the bombing raids and all other acts of war all over the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

QUESTION 3:

President Johnson said that "even this limited bombing of the North could come to an early end if our restraint is matched by restraint in Hanoi." Would your Government be willing to make such a move?

ANSWER:

The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is an independent and sovereign country, some ten thousand miles away from the United States, and has done no harm whatsoever to it. The unwarranted U.S. bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is an impudent act of aggression. The United States must bring it to an end.

To ask for "reciprocity" as a condition, or "restraint" as a price, is nothing but a trick to blur the distinction between the aggressor and the victim of aggression. The United States has shown no "restraint" in using its huge war machine against a small country, and still demands that we should show "restraint" and should not exercise our sacred rights to defend our Fatherland. This is sheer nonsense.

QUESTION 4:

The stated aim of the U.S. government is to set up a viable government in South Viet Nam which will not be frustrated by violence. Is this incompatible with the position of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam?

ANSWER:

An administration of traitors like that of the Thieu-Ky clique, even though protected by the bayonets of over 1,200,000 troops, is not viable, and will be overthrown by the people of South Viet Nam. Realities of life have shown that all U.S. efforts to a "viable" administration have failed.

A viable government in South Viet Nam should be a broad national democratic coalition government representative of the aspirations of all patriotic social sections.

The Political Programme of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation advocates the setting up of such a government. This line is fully supported by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

QUESTION 5:

In its April 3rd Statement, your Government declared "its readiness to appoint its representative to contact a U.S. representative with a view to determining with the American side the unconditional cessation of the U.S. bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam so that the talks may start."

Mr. Minister, what will be the rank of your representative? When and where will he make contact with the U.S. representative? When and where will the formal talks between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States start? And at what level?

ANSWER:

A representative with ambassadorial rank of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is ready to make contact with a representative of the U.S. government in Phnom Penh or in another place to be mutually agreed upon. In the course of this contact, the American side is expected to specify the date when the unconditional cessation of the U.S. bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam will become effective; then, the two sides will reach an agreement on the date, place and level of the formal talks between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States.

QUESTION 6:

Washington's point of view is that the U.S.A. has to live up to commitments made by four successive presidents to defend the freedom of the South Vietnamese people against aggression from a neighboring country. Could you comment on this point?

ANSWER:

To whom has the U.S. government made commitment to "defend freedom"? Is it not to a handful of corrupt people namely the Thieu-Ky clique put in power by itself, to oppose the Vietnamese people?

South and North Viet Nam form one country, the people of the two zones of Viet Nam fight against the same enemy-the U.S. aggressors. The U.S. government cannot conceal its cruel crimes of aggression in Viet Nam under the signboard of "commitment to defend the freedom" of South Viet Nam.

The commitment that the U.S. government must honour is President Johnson's solemn promise in the 1964 election campaign not to send American youths to the Viet Nam war, not to "escalate" the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam; it is also the solemn undertaking made by the U.S. representative at the 1954 Geneva Conference "to refrain from the threat or the use of force to disturb" the Geneva Agreements.

QUESTION 7:

How do you assess the present controversy in the U.S.A. about the Viet Nam war and its settlement? It has been said that you want "to win the war in Washington." What is your comment?

ANSWER:

The U.S. war of aggression in Viet Nam has not only devastated our country, it has also caused great losses and made life difficult for a great many American families.

Many Americans wonder: "Why should our sons go and die in Viet Nam? How to stop this war? Why has it not been brought to an end?"

This awakening of the American people worries those who have unleashed the war of aggression in Viet Nam. To check the anti-war trend in the United States, those elements try to touch American people's patriotic chord and scatter at large the assumption that the United States will not surrender, that we, Vietnamese want to "win the war in Washington." etc...

All these assertions are deceptive. In the course of history, the Vietnamese and American peoples bear no grudge to each other. As the U.S. government carries out a policy of intervention and aggression and wages war on the Vietnamese people, the latter have to fight to defend their country and safeguard their independence and freedom, as the American people did in the seventies of the 18th century.

Dear American friends,

True to your fine traditions of freedom and justice, you demand an end to the war of aggression, in championing the just cause of the Vietnamese people, and also for the sake of your vital interests and the honour of the United States. Your struggle and that of the Vietnamese people serve the same purpose—to thwart the unjust policy of aggression pursued by the Washington warmongers. The victory of this struggle will be a victory of the militant friendship between the American and Vietnamese peoples, a victory of justice, the just cause and peace.

I wish you good health and good luck.

THE NORTH—GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

On April 6, 1968, at 11.35a.m. the people's militia of L. village, Quang Binh province, downed a U.S. F.4 jet. It is the 400th plane grounded in that province with a 400,000 population. On this occasion, Co Kim Thanh, President of Quang Binh provincial administrative committee, made a statement extolling the successes recorded by the armed forces and people of the province in the fighting as well as in production and socialist construction. We give below some excerpts:

QUANG BINH FACES U.S. WAR OF DESTRUCTION

SINCE February 7, 1965, that is since over 1,000 days and nights, the U.S. imperialists have been frenziedly attacking our province, using all kinds of war materials at their disposal including B.52 strategic bombers. U.S. aircraft have flown more than 3,000 raids on our province, dropping on it hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs. The Seventh Fleet has blockaded our shores; its vessels shelled our coastal villages over 5,000 times. Besides, the U.S. imperialists have sent to our province many gangs of spies and commandos and distributed millions of leaflets. They sought to destroy the fruits of the revolution and suppress our combativeness. But over the last three years, led by the Party, the armed forces and people in our province have fought perseveringly and defeated in the main the U.S. war of destruction. We have succeeded in safeguarding the achievements of the revolution, keeping up socialist construction and meeting the ever-growing needs of the front.

To date, the armed forces and people in our province have downed 400 U.S. planes and sunk or damaged 34 war vessels. We have captured many pilots and groups of spies and commandos. At the same time as they achieved these exploits, our armed and para-military forces grew in strength and standard.

...Our communication lines were violently attacked (58 per cent of raids), but our road workers, flinching from no sacrifice, managed to keep traffic going. The people have been a great force in that task. Carrying out the slogan "Everything for the battle of communications!" the inhabitants of our province dismantled their houses to get timber, planks and bricks necessary for the mending of roads. Thanks to such dedication we succeeded in fulfilling and even overfulfilling the State transport plan, thus satisfying the requirements of the front, of production, of the fighting and of daily life.

Quang Binh artillery in action

News in Brief

ON April 5, 1968, the spokesman of the D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry denounced U.S. bombings and acts of war against North Viet Nam after President Johnson's announcement of "limited bombing." The Air attacks were carried out against the populated areas of the provinces of Lai Chau, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and Quang Binh and the Vinh Linh region. U.S. aircraft mined waterways in Nghe An and Quang Binh and flew reconnaissance sorties over Quang Ninh, Nam Ha and Ninh Binh provinces. U.S. war ships were sent in the territorial waters of the D.R.V.N. and shelled coastal villages and captured a number of sea fishermen.

ON April 5, 1968, the spokesman of the D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry made public a statement strongly condemning U.S. bombing raids on Sam Neua and Khang Khay towns (Laos), which damaged the offices of the economic and cultural representations of the D.R.V.N. and the P.R. of China.

THE Hon Gai Mining Corporation in the Quang Ninh colliery has overfulfilled by 0.5 percent its first quarter plan for the extraction of raw coal. The "Coc 6" mine, in particular, has topped its plan by 80 percent.

PRESIDENT Ho Chi Minh has awarded Labour Orders to 4 districts, 20 villages and 83 agricultural co-operatives and production teams for their achievements in the production campaigns in 1967 and in the 1967—1968 Winter-Spring cultivation. These vanguard units have overfulfilled the State plan, reaping from 5 to 8 tons of paddy per hectare (for two crops in a year).

NORTH Viet Nam now has 1,200,000 people attending adult complementary education courses. A system of schools for civil servants and youth has also been set up, comprising 25 schools for workers and peasants, 100 others for the youth of national minorities (on a part-work-part-study basis) and more than 2,000 secondary schools for rural cadres and youths. More than two-thirds of the districts in North Viet Nam have opened general schools for working people.

LIFE FLOURISHES OVER BOMB CRATERS

"WE will proceed to the distribution of bomb craters," said Vo Thi Thi, head of Tien Phong (Vanguard) agricultural co-operative while she led me to an underground trench on the bank of the Gianh river.

As I was unable to make head or tail of what she had said, she hastened to put me wise: "The last time, no major problems arose. Bomb craters dug in a field tended by a production brigade were directly 'handled' by that brigade. But of late the U.S. gangsters dropped dozens of bombs on a field of Brigade X, which was short-handed to 'manage' them all. It had to ask for the help of other brigades and 'share' with them these craters so that the latter may be put under crops for the benefit of the whole co-operative. You understand now?"

"Oh, yes," I said.

In fact, I did not quite understand. The brigade heads met. Directed by the co-operative president, the discussion was heated and all problems were quickly settled. Not only was the "distribution" of craters was on the agenda, but also ways to make the "best use" of them. Certainly there were for me many new aspects in production work in this "zone of fire." To have a clear picture of the whole business, I made up my mind to conduct an on-the-spot investigation.

I scoured the fields of Xa Lap, known to be the most fertile of T. village and saw a great number of craters dug by recent U.S. air raids, craters which were so deep that a long bamboo pole could not in some cases reach their bottom. Crops were destroyed, all the arable soil was removed, laying bare the deeper black and white clayey strata. Sheets of water were seen, covered with brick-red and oily foam.

Nguyen Song, a model farmer in the patriotic emulation movement, told me in and angry voice, "About fifty craters, like the mouths of a leech which sucks us to the very marrow! Really the U.S. marauders can match the former landlords!" For the peasants of that densely populated region, the havoc wrought to their land is in effect one of their most monstrous crimes. And for these last three years, the Yankees have flown more than 2,300 raids on T. village (two raids per day on the average) and released thousands of bombs, devastating over 30 hectares of fields, one-sixth of its farmland.

Of course, our farmers could no longer tolerate such a state of things. If on the battlefront enemy planes must be downed and air pirates punished, on the front of production we must maintain the area of cropland, make use of bomb craters and defeat the enemy by hook or by nook in the "rice battle."

AT first one only thought of filling the bomb craters and grow new crops on them. But little by

(Continued page 6)

...Not only have we managed to grow the usual crops, but we have also gradually applied advanced farming science and technique. Despite the aftermaths of a fierce war and most unfavourable climatic conditions, we have successively harvested five good crops; especially that of Winter 1966-Spring 1967 was the second bumper crop since 1960.

...Furthermore industrial and handicraft production has been constantly developing. While in the years of peace, our province had practically no industrial enterprises, it possesses now 20 ones turning out nearly 40 kinds of commodities, means of production and articles of daily use.

Parallel with the development of production, we have raised the efficiency of the branches serving the distribution of goods, and the management of public utility works in order to actively contribute to the stabilization and improvement of the people's life. Up to date, this has been a stable one; it is improved in some fields, especially in cultural and medical work. General education schools have been increasing ceaselessly. In 1967, the pupils enrolment reached 100,000; on the average a person in four goes to school. Complementary education continues to make headway; the number of schools for the youth and of those called "Three Responsibilities" (which consist in helping women to discharge more and more important tasks in production, economic management, and in the

(Continued page 6)

AN IMPERATIVE DEMAND:

Unconditional and Complete Cessation of the Bombing and Other War Acts Against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

WORKED out in late 1961 by Walt Rostow — author of the subsequent notorious Rostow-6 Plan — following the sending of the Taylor-Rostow mission to South Viet Nam by the late John F. Kennedy, the plan for the bombing of North Viet Nam was first applied "on a trial basis" on August 5, 1964, after the so-called "Tonkin Gulf incident."

On February 7, the bombing of North Viet Nam was presented as a retaliation for an attack by South Vietnamese patriots on the American base at Pleiku. But soon, the word "retaliation" was no longer used by Washington; air raids took place every day, as part of a four-point strategy by Maxwell Taylor, the theoretician of "Flexible Responses" which includes "Special Warfare," defeated by the N.F.L. fighters in early 1965 and replaced by "Limited Warfare."

These details are recalled merely to show what a minute and "scientific" war plan the American leaders had hatched against the Vietnamese people. The famous RAND (Research and Development) Corporation was entrusted with the task of elaborating a bombing doctrine, and the result was the theory of "escalations," with about forty successive stages.

BITTER FAILURE OF THE AIR WAR

THE aims of the American air war against the D.R.V.N., as stated in American official declarations, are as follows: first, to shore up the then crumbling morale of the Saigon regime; second, to prevent North Viet Nam's help to the struggle of the N.F.L.; and third, to bring pressure to bear on the Vietnamese people and the D.R.V.N. government to force them to accept terms favourable to the American imperialists in a settlement of the Viet Nam problem.

To achieve these aims, the entire air armada of the United States, including B.52s and ultramodern F.111s, was put to use; the best pilots, majors and colonels, were mobilized; the highest rungs of escalation were reached — air strikes but a few miles from the Chinese frontier, massive bombings of urban centres, among them the capital Hanoi, attacks on foreign ships in North Vietnamese harbours.

What are the results of all this?

After three years of air war, the Saigon puppet regime is nearer than ever to the abyss; irrefutable evidence of this was supplied by the events of *Tết*. The Vietnamese people, from North to South, are more than ever determined to stand up shoulder to shoulder against the American aggressors. The D.R.V.N.'s economic and military potential, far from tottering under American bombings, has expanded, and raids by *Intruders* and *Phantoms* have failed to slow down even scientific and artistic development in the D.R.V.N. Nobody in Hanoi has either been intimidated or deceived by the successive "peace campaigns" launched by Messrs Johnson, Rusk and Co. in the wake of each of their new steps in war escalation.

Actual happenings have disappointed the White House's and the Pentagon's expectations: more than 2,800 U.S. aircraft shot down over North Viet Nam, a no less considerable number of pilots killed or captured, the myth of U.S. air superiority punctured. Dissent has become ever more articulate in U.S. ruling circles: Senator Fulbright regrets having voted in favour of the "Gulf of Tonkin" resolution; recent disclosures about the American warship *Maddox* rouse the indignation of many Senators and Congressmen. More and more people insist on an end to escalation.

In the world, American attacks against the D.R.V.N., an independent and sovereign country, and besides a member of the socialist camp, have given rise to stormy protests from the broadest strata of public opinion, already strongly opposed to the American war in South Viet Nam. At each September session of the General Assembly of the U.N.O., the Johnson administration's delegate can hardly conceal his anxiety before an increasing number of countries officially demanding an unconditional end to the bombing of North Viet Nam:

"LIMITED BOMBING" AND ITS APPLICATION

DEFEATED militarily in both North and South Viet Nam, isolated politically in the United States, Mr Johnson was forced to deliver his March 31, 1968 speech. In the melodramatic tone so dear to him, he said: "Tonight, I have ordered our aircraft and naval vessels to make no attacks on North Viet Nam, except in the area north of the demilitarized zone."

But barely a few minutes after this speech, U.S. aircraft rained bombs on many localities of Thanh Hoa province, only 120 kilometres south of Hanoi. Lai Chau, a province located much further north, was bombed on April 4. U.S.A.F. barbarity increases as Johnson professes his peaceful intention: in Nghe An province, U.S. bombs dropped on Kim Lien hamlet, Nghi Hoa village, Nghi Loc district, completely knocked down the church and killed a number of believers. On April 4, a U.S. raid on Thach Ha, a district of Ha Tinh province, caused thirty civilian casualties. The American news agency *UPI* admits that the number of U.S. air missions over North Viet Nam has sharply increased after Johnson's speech. In Thanh Hoa province, twice as many places have been attacked compared with the period before Johnson's speech. Is this the "de-escalation" so noisily advertised by the Americans? Meanwhile, the American imperialists carry on their reconnaissance flights over several North Vietnamese provinces; American warships continuously violate territorial waters; on April 2, they even kidnapped North Vietnamese fishermen off the coast of Dien Chau (Nghe An province).

TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE

"LIMITED bombing" is in fact the result of a state of things in which the American imperialists have been compelled to reduce their air war against the D.R.V.N.: the U.S. air forces suffered a severe blow in February (2,200 aircraft and helicopters destroyed during the early spring offensive of the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam), and air support is needed for American troops in Khe Sanh and along Road No. 9. Bad weather conditions in April do not allow large-scale attacks on the Red River delta.

And so Mr Johnson tries to kill two birds with one stone. By announcing "limited bombardment," he thought he could placate both the military, who demand air support for their ground operations in South Viet Nam, and public opinion, especially American, which demands some gesture toward a peaceful settlement.

This gesture, claimed to be one of "good will" and costing very little to the aggressors, makes it possible for Mr Johnson to indulge in subtle bargaining: "Here is evidence of restraint on my part! And this is only a first step. If Hanoi responses by some gesture of restraint, I'll make others. From the 20th parallel, I may withdraw to the 19th, and so on and so forth..." Moreover, while giving the impression of making a major concession by declaring that the continued air strikes effect only one-tenth of the country's territory and avoid all populated food-producing areas, the U.S. in fact continues to pound such rice granaries and populous areas as Thanh Hoa and Nghe An provinces.

NO TWIST TO PRINCIPLES

THE D.R.V.N. Government has many times declared that its 4 points and the N.F.L. Political Programme, which reflect the stand of the Vietnamese people for independence and peace, must be jointly taken as the sound basis for a political settlement of the Viet Nam problem. It has also declared that talks between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States will begin as soon as the latter has proved that it has actually ceased unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

From the point of view of the D.R.V.N., and that of all honest and justice-loving people, the bombing of and all other acts of war against however small a part of the D.R.V.N. are intolerable acts of aggression. The April 3 declaration of the D.R.V.N. government severely condemned the "limited bombardment" ordered by Mr Johnson.

However, it declared its readiness to appoint a representative of ambassadorial rank to enter into preliminary contact with an American representative. In the course of this preliminary contact, the American side will determine the date for an unconditional cessation of the bombing and all other acts of war over the whole of the territory of the D.R.V.N.

This cession demanded by the D.R.V.N. comprises three imperatives, none of which is subject to compromise:

— Unconditional cessation

— On all the territory of the D.R.V.N.

— Of the bombing and all other acts of war.

NEW SIGN OF AMERICAN ILL FAITH

THE D. R. V. N. government has quickly proposed Phnom Penh, then Warsaw, as places of contact for the envoys of the D.R.V.N. and the U.S.A.

Mr Johnson had repeatedly declared that the American side was ready to go anywhere at any time to meet D.R.V.N. representatives. But now, when the Vietnamese side gets him down to brasstacks, he resorts to evasive tactics: futile pretexts are invoked to turn down the capital of neutral Cambodia, then objections are made to Warsaw, for being the capital of a non-neutral country.

No one doubts that the Vietnamese people will mean business in contacts and talks, as they do on the battlefield. Does this frighten the American aggressors and explain their dilatory attitude, which is in utter contradiction with their much publicized desire for "prompt talks"?

At present, the Americans are continuing their bombing of a sizable part of the D.R.V.N. and the sending of reinforcements to South Viet Nam where they are trying to consolidate their positions, and revive and modernize the puppet army. Their actions show that they are still determined to carry on their aggression. Indeed they are not ready for serious contacts and talks. Their responsibility will be all the more evident.

HOANG HUONG

D.R.V.N. FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN DENOUNCES U.S. DILATORY TACTICS IN QUEST FOR VIET NAM – U.S. PRELIMINARY CONTACT

The Spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on April 13, 1968 issued the following statement:

ON April 3, 1968, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam made it clear that that the United States had been led to announce the "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam was an admission of failure, and at the same time, a crafty trick of the U.S. government to placate public opinion. Though the U.S. Government has not seriously and fully met the legitimate demands of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, of progressive American opinion and of world opinion, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam has declared its readiness to appoint a representative to contact a U.S. representative to ascertain with the American side the unconditional cessation of the U.S. bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam so that talks may get started.

This just position and correct attitude of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam has elicited warm appreciation and strong support from broad sections of world public opinion and progressive American opinion.

Following up the April 3, 1968 Statement, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam suggested on April 8, 1968 to the American side Phnom Penh, capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia, as the place for preliminary contacts at ambassadorial level between the two parties with a view to preparing for formal talks. Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Head of the State of Cambodia, has declared his willingness to provide all facilities in Phnom Penh for the contacts between the representative of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and that of the U.S. Government. But on April 10, 1968, the U.S. authorities came out with the claim that "Phnom Penh presents difficulties for them because of technical problems arising from the absence of a United States Mission at that location," to reject the Cambodian capital as a site for preliminary contacts. At the same time, they proposed a number of places which do not suit the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

With a view to making it possible for formal talks to begin at an early date, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, while continuing to stress that Phnom Penh is an appropriate place for the preliminary contacts, suggested an alternative—Warsaw, capital of the Polish People's Republic. This suggestion of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam did takes into account the objection raised by the American side about its "technical problems arising from the absence of a United States Mission." The Government of the Polish People's Republic has warmly welcomed the choice of Warsaw as the place for the preliminary contacts and announced its readiness to supply all necessary facilities. But on April 12, 1968, the U.S. authorities, without giving their opinion on the choice of Warsaw, raised two conditions as "minimum standards" for the place of preliminary contacts. They demanded that the contacts should take place at a neutral country, where both sides maintain a mission and have adequate communications.

This U.S. attitude regarding the choice of the place of preliminary contacts between the representatives with ambassadorial rank of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States is at utter variance with the statements made by the U.S. Government so far. As is well known, U.S. President L.B. Johnson and many American official personalities have time and again stated that they desire "prompt talks" with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and that they are "ready to go anywhere, at any time" for talks.

There is no doubt that the U.S. Government is deliberately trying to delay the preliminary contacts at ambassadorial level it has agreed on with the D.R.V.N. Meanwhile, it is stepping up attacks with U.S. aircraft and warships on the part of the territory of the D.R.V.N. extending from the 17th to the 20th parallel. U.S. Defense Secretary C. Clifford has cynically stated that U.S. aircraft will continue their reconnaissance flights north of the 20th parallel. The U. S. Government has asked for increased appropriations for the war of aggression in Viet Nam, brought in more U.S. troops and launched big operations in South Viet Nam, and sent more B.52's to Okinawa for intensified bombings of South Viet Nam.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam strongly denounces to world opinion and progressive American opinion the obstinacy and perfidy of the U.S. authorities. The U.S. Government must unconditionally stop its bombing raids and all other acts of war throughout the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and let the South Vietnamese people settle themselves their own affairs.

If the United States Government really wants talks with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, it must stop creating difficulties in the choice of a place for preliminary contacts, which only delay the talks between the two sides.

Saigon Regime's Hopeless Plight

TO restore its disorganized army, increase taxes, win back control of the countryside, bring new figures into the government," to try and widen the basis on which it rests—such are the tasks assigned by Johnson to the Saigon regime in his speech of March 31. That such a vast program has been publicly dictated from Washington by Johnson threw a strong light on the puppet character of the Saigon "government" as well as its present critical condition. A clear picture of its predicament can be given by a little more detailed examination of Mr. Johnson's words. Thieu has been crying on the rooftops that he is going to mobilize a fresh contingent of 135,000 men. It is certain that within a few months—if he is still there—he will present the bill to the Americans, asking for more dollars, claiming even that more men had been drafted than planned. It has become a tradition in the Saigon army, at least among field and company officers, to pocket the pay of dead and absent soldiers. No matter how badly its effectives are decimated and though desertions are on the upgrade (present rate: 100,000 a year, according to American figures), Saigon continues to affirm that its army is expanding.

In faat, in the course of the general offensive staged by the people's forces in February-March alone, more than 200,000 Saigon troops were disbanded, not including casualties. Hundreds of military posts were abandoned, others razed to the ground, a large number of battalion, regiment and division C.P.s and H.Q.s fiercely attacked. In Saigon itself the Joint General Staff and other important H.Q.s were shelled or stormed. Worn out and disrupted by several years of "special warfare" (1961-1965) the Saigon army had hoped for a breath-taking respite behind the shield proffered by the American expeditionary corps. But nothing of the kind happened, for the American forces were unable to ensure security even for their own bases and units. The disruptive process continued, even worsened on the moral plane by the presence of large masses of U.S. troops. For the more the war was Americanized, the more exposed was the anti-national character of the policy pursued by Saigon, all camouflage being impossible. Puppet soldiers and officers saw their own villages razed and burnt down by American bombs, their incomes shrink because of inflation, the best dwelling places taken by the Americans, who did not even bother to hide their scorn for their "allies."

Whole units crossed over to the side of the people's forces in full kit during the *Tết* offensive. Washington says it is going to give better weapons to the Saigon troops: chances are that those weapons will very soon be used against the American expeditionary corps. For with defeats, conflicts between Americans and puppets have multiplied, and the Saigon army, a white elephant, threatens to become a serious danger for the Americans.

As to scraping up new recruits, one must know where to get them. Until their big *Tết* setback, the Americans and Saigon controlled only the cities and surrounding areas, a thin rural fringe. There is no longer any need to demonstrate the failure of rural pacification, which has been admitted by American officials. Since February, all the pacification teams and many regional and local armed units have sought shelter in the cities. Within six weeks additional rural regions with a population of over 1.5 million have been liberated by the revolutionary forces. The liberated villages now border on urban areas, and young city-dwellers who want to escape conscription can easily find refuge there.

Control of the countryside, a dream nurtured by the Americans ever since their coming to South Viet Nam in 1954, has never been realized. The peasants of South Viet Nam had received land from the revolutionary power. They have organized their lives and been fighting for over twenty years now, arms in hand. No alien force could ever impose its rule on South Vietnamese villages. Washington has had to renounce that dream for good. Long before their *Tết* offensive, the people's forces already controlled the major part of the countryside: nothing illustrates this better than the rate of non-perception of taxes by the Saigon authorities, listed in a U.S.O.M. report (quoted by Bernard Fall):

1962: 50%
1963: 57%
1964: 74%

How far could Saigon tax-collectors go now? How utterly preposterous is Johnson's order to his puppets to increase taxes! The budget will swell from 95 billion to 110; deficit from 25 billion to 40; the volume of paper money will rise 25%, whereas controlled areas are shrinking! Inflation will get worse and worse, and so will the population's and the soldiers' and functionaries' living conditions; speculation and embezzlement will be even more rampant. The regime is digging its own grave under its feet!

For the fighting has penetrated into the heart of the cities, the last lair of the Americans and their puppets. Many populous quarters of Saigon have been under the people's control for weeks, puppet functionaries and police have been driven away, the more bloodthirsty ones punished. In many cities, the administrative machinery has vanished; in Hue — Thua Thien, of the 3,000 administrative agents, only 150 remain, and 600 police have had to be sent over from Saigon, to replace those who had disappeared. Absenteeism is prevailing in all services, while at the top, accounts are being settled at an accelerated tempo.

Within ten days, Thieu dismissed two corps commanders out of four, 18 provincial governors out of 44; he is threatening to sack the prime minister and the police chief, reputed favourable to Ky. The military provincial chiefs are stripped of their prerogatives to the benefit of newly-promoted civilians. Washington calls on its puppets to unite. But the more the machine is out of joint, the bitterer are the rivalries among the flunkeys who strive to cling to their positions, which they know are short-lived. Competition is hot between Thieu and Ky, while others, hitherto kept away from power, are scrambling for a few seats or portfolios, to profit from American handouts. So-called "Fronts for national salvation" or "for the defence of freedom" are being formed, to be used by unscrupulous adventurers as springboards to power. The prospect of imminent disaster has not in the least brought together the puppets, for each strives to get the maximum of spoils from power within the shortest time. American services, at each critical outbreaks, set about putting together replacement teams.

(Continued page 7)

PREMIER PHAM VAN DONG CONDOLES OVER LUTHER KING'S DEATH

Premier Pham Van Dong on April 8, 1968 sent a message to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, expressing his deep condolences over the tragic death of Dr. Martin Luther King.

The message reads:

"I am shocked at the news of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King. I wish to convey to you and through you to his bereaved family my heartfelt condolences.

"Dr. Martin Luther King was an outstanding political figure who dedicated his life to the Afro-Americans' civil rights movement. Over recent years, he had done his utmost to promote the movement against the U.S. aggressors' unjust war in Viet Nam. He demanded that the United States unconditionally stop the bombing of North Viet Nam. He strongly supported the anti-draft movement of the American youth, and called on the Afro-Americans to refuse to enlist for Viet Nam.

"The murder of Dr. Martin Luther King by racists who were encouraged by the U.S. rulers was an attack on the Afro-Americans' civil rights movement and on the anti-Viet Nam war drive.

"But wherever there is oppression there is struggle. The Afro-Americans' movement is rising like a tidal wave, and it is impossible for the U.S. rulers to suppress it with force or lure it with deception.

"The murder of Dr. Martin Luther King has exacerbated the Afro-Americans' hatred and stiffened their will to fight resolutely for their sacred rights. The peoples of Viet Nam and of the other countries in the world have been shocked by the savage crime of the U.S. racists.

"Once again, I share with our Afro-American brothers their deep grief and voice the strong sympathy and support of the Vietnamese people for their legitimate struggle."

LIFE FLOURISHES OVER BOMB CRATERS

(Continued from page 3)

little, this work proved to be inadequate and even impossible owing to the evergrowing numbers of craters and our farmers decided to use them in a different way.

Some bomb craters were turned into water tanks to combat drought in elevated ricefields. Others were transformed into ponds for the rearing of carps, others became a small three-purpose plot in which fish are reared at the bottom, water lilies planted all around and taros grown on the edge of the craters.

On the 30 hectares of field tended by Le Thi Ngoc brigade, the Yankees dropped 96 bombs which completely churned up the land. However a few days later, all was again "put back in order": Bomb craters were either filled up or put under other drops than rice. The farmers of T. village spoke highly of Le Thi Ngoc brigade: "These courageous young girls know how to make bomb craters productive!"

They have also improved the tools to fill up bomb craters. For instance, they have turned a harrow into a kind of man-drawn rake which can easily level the ground. They have learned from experience that the sooner the filling up of bomb craters is done, the easier it is. That is why, immediately after an air raid, men and women have been seen rushing out and buckling down to repair work.

In this "zone of fire" of Quang Binh province, the saving of an inch of land from the destruction by U.S. planes is also as arduous and necessary as the downing of a marauding U.S. plane.

CORRECTION

In our last issue, page 2, column 5, line 41: "special issuing rights" should of course read "special drawing rights."

German Party and Government Delegation Visits Viet Nam

At the invitation of the Viet Nam Workers' Party C.C. and D.R.V.N. Government, a delegation of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Government of the G.D.R. led by Prof. Kurt Hager, member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the C.C. of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, has arrived in Hanoi on a friendship visit. During its stay here it has been put abreast with the over-all situation in Viet Nam and the problems concerning this country.

The Viet Nam Workers' Party gave a reception in honour of the German hosts.

A joint communiqué has been signed in Hanoi between the delegation of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and D.R.V.N. Government and that of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and G.D.R. Government.

THE WHOLE WORLD IS ON OUR SIDE

WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS GENERAL COUNCIL HOLDS EXTRAORDINARY SESSION IN SUPPORT OF VIET NAM

THE General Council of World Federation of Trade Unions held its extraordinary session in Moscow on April 8, 1968 with a view to strengthening and expanding the solidarity movement of the labouring peoples and Trade Unions throughout the world with the Vietnamese people and resolutely condemning the U.S. imperialists' war of aggression.

This was the first time that the General Council, one of the highest organs of the World Federation of Trade Unions, held a session with the participation of various representatives of Trade Union organizations which are not members of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Delegates of over 70 countries representing the Trade Unions of five continents were present at the meeting.

At the session, Bitossi, President of the World Federation of Trade Unions, condemned the U.S. imperialists' aggression against Viet Nam. He said in unequivocal terms: "Though the U.S. imperialists have brought over half a million U.S. troops to South Viet Nam and do not flinch from any barbarous deed, they have been unable to achieve any of their purposes. The March 31 speech of Johnson was merely an admission of the serious crisis of the whole policy of the U.S. imperialists in Viet Nam." Louis Saillant, Secretary General of the W.F.T.U., made an analysis of the U.S. imperialists' process of aggression in Viet Nam, he spoke of the brilliant victories of the Vietnamese people of both North and South, and the just position of the D.R.V.N. Government and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. "It is necessary for the working peoples all over the world to realize that they must take part in the struggle of the Vietnamese labouring people," he stressed. "The noble task ahead of us is to find methods aimed at expanding the great international movement for solidarity with the Vietnamese workers and people."

Hoang Quoc Viet, Head of the Delegation of the D.R.V.N. Federation of Trade Unions and Tran Hoai Nam, Head of the Delegation of the South Viet Nam Liberation Federation of Trade Unions, both Presidium members of the session, were given a tremendous ovation by the audience when they took the floor.

DELEGATES FROM 40 COUNTRIES MEET IN STOCKHOLM TO CONDEMN U.S. IMPERIALISTS' AGGRESSION IN VIET NAM

THE Extraordinary Session on Viet Nam of the International Liaison Committee of the Stockholm Conference was recently held in Stockholm (Sweden) and attended by 150 delegates from various organizations of over 40 countries.

Opening the Conference, Professor Gunnar Myrdals, former Minister of Finance of Sweden, and Bertin Swanstrom, Secretary General of the Swedish Committee in Support of Viet Nam, came out strongly against U.S. aggression against Viet Nam and pointed out that U.S. military and financial strength would not match the people's might.

Delegates from the socialist countries, Asia, Africa, Latin America and Western countries to the Conference highly valued the Vietnamese people's struggle, regarded their victories in the recent general offensive and widespread uprisings as extraordinary feats of arms and heartily supported the position of the D.R.V.N. Government and the South Viet Nam N.F.L.

American delegates—white and black—and representatives of U.S. servicemen who had broken away from the U.S. army to seek political asylum in Sweden, voiced their determination to oppose draft, and demanded withdrawal of U.S. expeditionary troops from South Viet Nam; they regarded the cause of national liberation of the Vietnamese people as that of the American people's, considering this as an important contribution to the struggle for liberation of the Black people in the U.S.

The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution on Viet Nam demanding that the U.S. Government put a permanent and unconditional end to its bombing and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N., withdraw U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and let the Vietnamese people settle themselves their internal affairs on the basis of the N.F.L. Political Programme without foreign interference.

The Conference proposed to world peace organizations to launch waves of struggle in April 1968 in co-ordination with actions in the U.S.A. for an end to the U.S. war of aggression in Viet Nam.

Quang Binh...

(Continued from page 3)

handling of state affairs — *Ed.*) increases. The medical network is strengthened without let-up and spreads to villages and co-operatives. It provides adequate care to the wounded and successfully sees to the health of the people. Important successes have been recorded in the care of mothers and children.

...As the big victories won by the armed forces and people of South and North Viet Nam had driven the U.S. imperialists into an impasse, Johnson had to announce "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam. But the die-hard U.S. imperialists continue to attack an important part of the D.R.V.N. territory, including our province. The recent statement made by our government made it abundantly plain that "so long as the United States pursues its aggression against Viet Nam, the Vietnamese people, responding to President Ho Chi Minh's sacred appeal, will resolutely fight on till final victory to defend the North, liberate the South, advance towards the peaceful reunification of the country." On behalf of 400,000 citizens of Quang Binh province, together with our compatriots and comrades in the South, in Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces and in Hue city *, we will overcome all difficulties, accept all sacrifices and fight with might and main to foil the U.S. war of destruction and carry out the tasks entrusted to us by the Fatherland.

**Hue, the old "imperial city," is capital of Thua Thien province. In the first war of resistance, Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces formed a combat zone named Binh-Tri-Thien well known for its exploits.*

WORLD OPINION ACCLAIMS D.R.V.N. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT AND CENSURES JOHNSON'S PERFIDY

WORLD public opinion has warmly acclaimed the April 3 statement of the D.R.V.N. Government on the "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam by U.S. aircraft and at the same time strongly denounced and condemned Johnson's perfidious move.

THE Governments of the **Soviet Union**, of the **German Democratic Republic**, of the **Rumanian Socialist Republic**, of the **Bulgarian People's Republic**, the Foreign Ministry of the **Czechoslovak Socialist Republic**, Premier of the **Polish People's Republic** Cyrankiewicz, Foreign Minister of the **Mongolian People's Republic** Dougersuren, have on the one hand come out in support of the just position and good will of the D.R.V.N. Government and on the other stressed the failure of U.S. imperialists and their new move behind the announcement of "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam.

The April 5 Statement of the Soviet Government underlined that the stand of the D.R.V.N. Government "shows a real way towards the cessation of the war in Viet Nam, towards a political settlement in the interests of the Vietnamese people and the return to normal of the situation in South-East Asia."

The statement remarked, "The U.S. Government has been forced to decide on a partial cessation of the bombing of North Viet Nam. However, its aggression does not cease yet for the only reason that only part and not the whole of the territory of the D.R.V.N. is subjected to bombing, since the bombing of nearly a half of the territory of the D.R.V.N. is still going on."

The press in the above-mentioned countries and in other socialist countries has not been sparing of comments on significance of the D.R.V.N. Government's statement and the perfidy of U.S. rulers.

The *Hsinhua News Agency* of the **People's Republic of China**, in a commentary on April 5, pointed out that Johnson's speech on limited bombing of North Viet Nam was but a new manoeuvre aiming at rescuing the U.S. imperialists from an utterly pitiful plight, both internally and externally, in which they were landed. This manoeuvre could not conceal their attempt to widen the war of aggression in Viet Nam, the agency stressed.

The newspaper *Rodong Shinmun* of the **Korean Democratic People's Republic** wrote on April 6 that Johnson's speech was tantamount to "a victory for the Vietnamese people in their struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, freedom and independence, and bitter defeat for the U.S. imperialists."

Nepszabadsag, newspaper of the **Hungarian People's Republic**, said, "Jonhson had to order 'limited bombing' because U.S. defeat in Viet Nam is already evident."

All **Cuban** newspapers have frontpaged the April 3 statement of the D.R.V.N. Government and expressed their full support for it. The newspaper *Granma* said, "Johnson knows well that only failure is in store for him in Viet Nam, no matter how many additional troops he may send there and however savage may be the bombing and shelling he may order."

IN **Asian and African countries**, public opinion's attention has also been focused on the statement of the D.R.V.N. Government.

The **Cambodian** newspaper *Rambuja* warmly acclaimed the good will of the D.R.V.N. and pointed out that Johnson's decision on the "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam was "absurd."

The Central Committee of the **Neo Lao Hakxat**, in its statement, voiced the strong support of the Lao people for the statement of the D.R.V.N. Government.

All **Cairo** (U.A.R.) newspapers have frontpaged that statement.

The Government paper in **Syria** *Al Saorah* said, "only a total halt of the bombing of North Viet Nam and all other acts of war can lead to fruitful talks."

The **Algerian** newspaper *El Moudjahid* severely criticized Johnson for having not adequately met the legitimate demands of the D.R.V.N.

Many **Japanese** newspapers maintained that the defeats sustained by the U.S. in its war of aggression in Viet Nam and the political and economical difficulties at home have prompted Johnson's March 31 speech.

Yomiuri Shimbun termed the continuation of the U.S. bombing of North Viet Nam a "stupid act," whereas *Asahi Shimbun* commented that the U.S. was just going on with its policy of war in Viet Nam.

IN **Western countries**, Waldeck Rochet, Secretary General of the **French Communist Party**, observed that the re-assertion of the San Antonio formula by Johnson indicated that he was hatching new schemes to continue the war of aggression.

James Davidson, **British** Liberal M.P., said that finally Johnson did not come to the solution of the very important problem, namely, the unconditional cessation of all bombings of North Viet Nam.

Express, **Austrian** paper, said, "Johnson's statements means that bombs continue to fall [on North Viet Nam]."

IN the **United States**, the *New York Times* on April 3 held that the bombing of Thanh Hoa, 333km from the Demilitarized Zone had destroyed the confidence in Johnson's peace campaign.

AFP reported that Senator **Fulbright**, upon learning that the U.S. bombed Thanh Hoa, declared that he had committed a mistake when thinking that Johnson had made a significant effort aimed at putting an end to the war.

Many personalities of the anti-Viet Nam war movement have welcomed the statement of the D.R.V.N. Government.

Dellinger, editor-in-chief of the review *Liberation* declared that those who oppose the war in Viet Nam must not stand aloof and make suggestions; instead they must continue to exert pressure upon the U.S. Government for a peaceful settlement of the Viet Nam problem.

According to Rev. **Berrigan**, a well-known peace militant, the D.R.V.N. Government's statement constitutes a "generous act."

FIERCE BATTLES...

(Continued from page 8)

northwest and southwest of Ta Con were under heavy P.L.A.F. artillery fire.

Initial reports put the enemy's losses from April 3 to 9 at 2,200 men killed or wounded (mostly G.I.'s) and 19 planes and helicopters downed or heavily damaged.

IN other sectors of **Hue—Quang Tri** region, the P.L.A.F. were very active around Dong Ha where an airfield was shelled on April 2. The following day, a U.S. column was intercepted 10km northwest of Dong Ha and had 340 men put out of action, 5 tanks destroyed and a chopper downed.

Farther southwest, on April 1, 2 enemy battalions suffered one company wiped out and 270 men killed or wounded, 5km east of Quang Tri town where the airfield was heavily pounded on the night of April 6.

In **Hue** city, the airfield in the citadel was shelled twice within a week (April 2 and 7). On April 3, in two engagements in the northwest and southwest of Hue, the enemy lost 270 men killed or wounded and 3 tanks destroyed. Three days later 3 puppet battalions were intercepted 3km west of the city; 305 enemy soldiers were put out of action in that battle and 110 others in an engagement also west of the city.

AROUND **Saigon**, despite operation *Certain Victory* conducted by 50,000 G.I.'s and puppet troops, Tan Son Nhat and Bien Hoa airbases were shelled on April 4 and 6. On April 3, the P.L.A.F. fought a battle 4 km from that airbase and another near Hoc Mon, 10 km north of Saigon.

On the Long Tau river, a 5,000-ton cargo-boat was set on fire and blazed for many hours: it was the 6th ship attacked on that river within 12 days.

On April 7, the guerillas wiped out a puppet company and destroyed 4 amphibious cars about 60km northwest of Saigon. Four days earlier, in a 10 minutes' battle the P.L.A.F. had killed or wounded nearly one hundred G.I.'s and destroyed 8 M.113 armoured cars 70km north of Saigon.

IN the **Mekong Delta**, between April 4 and 7 the regional troops and guerillas of Ben Tre province won brilliant victories, foiling many raids conducted by several U.S. and puppet battalions northwest, north and east of Ben Tre town: 540 enemy troops (including 300 G.I.'s) were killed or wounded, 3 helicopters downed, 4 armoured cars, 8 howitzers and 4 vessels destroyed or damaged.

IN the **Western High Plateaux**, two airfields were shelled on the night of April 5. About thirty kilometres west of Kontum, the P.L.A.F. fought many battles against units of U.S. Division 4 on April 5, causing hundreds of enemy casualties.

IN **Binh Dinh** province, the P.L.A.F. on April 3 hammered at a position defended by South Korean mercenaries near Qui Nhon (400km northeast of Saigon), putting out of action 80 men.

SAIGON REGIME'S...

(Continued from page 5)

To rebuild a viable puppet army and administration, to shore up finances, to win back control of the countryside, to win over certain strata of the population and turn them into a stable foundation for a pro-American administration — those have become at present challenges impossible to meet. To create a vigorous puppet army and administration, the effective tools and ultimate targets of its neo-colonial policy — this design pursued since 1954 by Washington with all the means it could muster now faces irremediable failure.

Indeed, at every turn, there have been in the American ruling circles men with minds sober enough to take correct stock of the Saigon puppets. Senator Mansfield wrote in October 1954 on the political climate in Saigon: "There is still the same short-sighted struggle for immediate gain among the various political groups, sects and factions... None is broadly based in the people... Saigon is the hub of the political crisis... has seethed with intrigue and counter-intrigue, rumors and counter-rumors. The political plotting goes on in army circles, government circles, foreign circles, in party headquarters, in police headquarters..."

General Maxwell Taylor, who was U.S. Ambassador in Saigon in 1964-65, quoting the above words of the senator, added: "Such words might have been written at the height of anyone of the political crises in Saigon from 1964 to 1966." (In *Responsibility and Response*, p. 54).

Let us add: in 1968, the situation is even worse. All effort on Washington's part to patch up the regime is doomed to failure.

Programs of THE VOICE OF VIET NAM for listeners in North America and Northern Europe

THE VOICE OF VIET NAM is broadcasting in English daily:

FOR NORTH AMERICA

— At 9.10 and 10.40 p.m. (EST) on 31 metres, 9,525 KCs
— At 11.40 p.m. (EST) on 19 metres, 6,135 KCs. and 2.40 a.m. (EST) on 31 metres, 9,655 KCs.

FOR NORTHERN EUROPE

— At 4.20 p.m. (EST) that is, 21.20 (GMT), on 19 metres, 15,230 KCs.

SOUTH VIETNAM

FIERCE BATTLES IN KHE SANH SECTOR

Heavy Losses Inflicted on U.S.-Puppet Troops

SINCE the beginning of Operation *Pegasus* to relieve the beleaguered U.S. Marines of Regiment 26 at Khe Sanh, fierce battles have taken place in that sector, chiefly from August 30 onward.

To date, in Ban Cat and Ban Khoai villages (5km southeast of Ta Con), the P.L.A.F. have fought back 6 counter-attacks of the First Air Mobile Cavalry Division. *Giai Phong Press Agency* reported 70 G.I.'s killed or wounded and 2 aircraft downed. Meanwhile an enemy sortie from Ta Côn in the direction of the southwest resulted in 40 Marines casualties. In the evening many positions were pounded. Ta Con itself received 230 cannon shells, Western agencies reported.

The following day, at 6.30 a.m. a new enemy sally from Ta Con in the direction of the southwest for a link-up with the airborne "Cav." was fiercely repelled: a company was wiped out. G.I.s of the First Air Mobile Cavalry Division who came to their rescue had a company put out of action, 3 choppers downed and 5 others burnt.

Meanwhile in Ben Cat sector, 3 counter-attacks of the "Cav." were beaten back after taking 300 casualties: 2 companies of Brigade 3, First Air Cavalry Division were, thus wiped out. On the evening of April 4, in the attacks against Hill 471 on Highway 9 north of Huong Hoa, the P.L.A.F. killed or wounded about one hundred "Cav." 11 enemy aircraft were downed on that day.

On April 5, P.L.A.F. attacks continued in Ben Cat sector and on Hill 471, taking a toll of one hundred enemy soldiers; one F-4 *Phantom* was downed. Meanwhile a "Cav." battalion landed at Hue Ha, 3km south of Huong Hoa, was intercepted by the P.L.A.F. wiped out a company: 128 Yankees killed or wounded.

On April 6, at 3.40 a.m. the P.L.A.F. assaulted Lang Con, 3km southwest of Huong Hoa, defended by the G.I.'s of the First Cav. and after 30 minutes' fighting wiped out a company: 200 G.I.'s were killed or wounded.

In the morning Hill 595 near Ta Con was the site of an outstanding feat of arms of the P.L.A.F.: at 10.30 a.m. 2 U.S. Marine companies from Ta Con tried to occupy the hill where a P.L.A.F. 6-man group had been lying in wait. Using their weapons only when the enemy was near, our men fought a defensive battle for many hours running, repelling all enemy assaults; they got control of the battlefield after virtually putting out of action a company (115 enemy soldiers killed or wounded) and capturing all enemy weapons.

On the night of April 6, the positions of Marine Regiment 26 in Ta Con was pounded and Ta Con itself received 300 mortar and cannon shells, the U.S. command reported.

The following day, the third group of puppet helicopter troops who landed on Hill 519 north of Lang Vay (position of U.S. "special forces" taken by the P.L.A.F. two months ago) suffered a heavy setback: Assailed by a P.L.A.F. heavy fire upon their landing, these airborne soldiers did not dare to deploy their units for an attack and regrouped themselves into resistance pockets pending the arrival of planes and artillery. With powerful assaults launched on the night of March 7, the P.L.A.F succeeded in breaking through the enemy's line and wiping out one by one these resistance pockets; after a battle lasting many hours they got control of the terrain and put out of action 650 enemy troops including 2 puppet para battalions.

The battles continued in the region of Highway 9 where on April 8, a jet plane was downed and the following day the U.S. positions on Hills 832 and 689 respectively,

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SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE HAIL D.R.V.N. GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT

THE April 3, 1968 statement by the D.R.V.N. Government has been hailed by *Giai Phong* Radio in a recent broadcast.

"In unequivocal and incisive words," the commentary read, *"the statement of the D.R.V.N. Government laid bare the obdurate and bellicose nature of the U.S. imperialists and exposed their bitter failure in their war of aggression against our country. It reaffirmed the just position and good will of the D.R.V.N. Government as well as the iron-like determination of our kith-and-kin in the North to bring to a successful end, together with their brothers and sisters in the South, the nation's glorious resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation."*

The commentary went on to say:

"Elated at the resounding and repeated victories of the armed forces and people in both zones of our fatherland, we fully agree with, and thoroughly support, the position of the D.R.V.N. Government which is marked by its moral soundness and good will."

Once again, *Giai Phong* Radio reaffirmed the resolve of the South Vietnamese people:

"So long as the U.S. imperialists do not give up their aggression against, and their scheme to subjugate, South Viet Nam, so long as they dream of partitioning our country and carry out a war of destruction against North Viet Nam, the Southern armed forces and people assembled under the invincible banner of the National Front for Liberation are determined to hold firm their weapons and to fight until complete victory to liberate the South, defend the North, achieve eventual national reunification, and contribute to the safeguard of national independence and peace in the world."

The commentary pointed out that *"Johnson's March 31 speech smacked of the bellicosity, wickedness and perfidy of the U.S. imperialists who, though bogged down neck-deep in Viet Nam, still do not renounce their will of aggression."*

With unquestionable evidence the commentary exposed Johnson's peace double talk about Viet Nam and made clear that the U.S. imperialists' expansionist and aggressive design against the Vietnamese people and the peoples in South-East Asia is the root and immediate cause of the Viet Nam war.

"To achieve genuine peace," the commentary stressed, *"one must sternly condemn the imperialists, demand that they end their aggression against our country, unconditionally stop all bombings and other war acts against the D.R.V.N., withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, respect our people's sacred national rights formally recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. Such is the legitimate position of the Vietnamese people as embodied in the 4 points put forward by the D.R.V.N. Government and the Political Programme of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation."*

After stigmatizing Johnson's line expounded in his March 31 speech as nothing other than that of a die-hard aggressor as far as North and South Viet Nam are concerned, the commentary pointed out that it deliberately did not seriously and adequately meet the legitimate demands of the D.R.V.N. Government as well as of the progressive opinion in the United States and in the world. Johnson kept harping on the old "North Viet Nam aggression" tune, and denying to the South Vietnamese people their inviolable right to settle themselves their internal affairs without foreign interference. The commentary added with emphasis:

"He obdurately ignored the role of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, the organizer, leader and inspirer of the victorious South Vietnamese people who for over seven years have been frustrating all the strategies of the Americans in their war of aggression."

After showing that Johnson's speech could not conceal the all-round and ever heavier failures of the United States in its war of aggression against Viet Nam, the commentary called on the South Vietnamese armed forces and people to rush forward in the flush of their successes to win greater victories.

U.S. AND PUPPETS PILE UP CRIMES IN SOUTH VIET NAM

ON March 22, 1968 the South Viet Nam Liberation Trade Unions Federation issued a statement strongly denouncing the U.S. aggressors and the Saigon puppets' murder, on the night of January 31, 1968, of Mr. Tran Van Kieu, alias Le Cong Van, member of the Executive Committee of the L.T.U.F. and Vice-President of the L.T.U.F. Branch in Saigon — Gia Dinh.

Tran Van Kieu fell into the enemy's hands in 1967. The U.S. and puppets put him to the most savage tortures, even broke one of his legs, without being able to bend his indomitable will to fight.

On the night of January 31, 1968, frightened by the general offensive and uprisings of the South Vietnamese people, the U.S. puppet stealthily took him and other patriots to the desert street of Hong Bang (Saigon) and shot them, then said that they had been killed in an attack by a Liberation Army unit.

In its statement, the South Viet Nam Liberation Trade Unions Federation urged the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation to severely punish the U.S. aggressors and their agents and make them repay their blood debt.

ON the afternoon of February 28, 1968, *Giai Phong Press Agency* reported, three American helicopters swooped down on a group of civilian boats sailing along Vam Co Tay Canal from Thu Thua, a town under the U.S.-puppet control, to Ngang River. All the six motor boats and 32 sampans were sent to the bottom.

The people on the river side immediately rushed out to the rescue of the victims. The U.S. helicopters opened fire on the rescuers to prevent their operation but in vain. In spite of the timely rescue, nearly 100 people onboard lost their lives or were wounded.

BLOODY massacres were also perpetrated by the U.S. and puppets against the people of Duc Hoa district, Hau Nghia province, barely 30 kilometres west of Saigon. On the night of March 12, the puppet province chief led a company of puppet commandos into the Go Quao "strategic hamlet" in Duc Lap Ha village. They unwarrantedly arrested ten young people and two youngsters, beat them up and shot them afterwards.

Also in this district, on March 5 and 6, American planes dropped demolition, steel-pellet and napalm bombs on a residential quarter of the workers of the Hiep Hoa sugar mill, the well-known sugar supplier in South Viet Nam. The raid caused considerable losses in life and property to the local people.